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We invite Old School Baptist elders to send us articles on

- (1) doctrines,
- (2) types and shadows, and
- (3) Biblical topics for possible publication.

REPLY TO "WHAT IS TRUTH?" By Gilbert Beebe, 1844

[Extract of a letter from a friend in the East.] "There are things in which I am more interested than in any pecuniary consideration, and they may be implied from the following interrogatories, viz: What is truth? and, what is duty? A general answer may be given to the first in which all professed christians will agree, viz: The Bible or word of God; but of the doctrines and duties which that word teaches and enjoins there is a great variety of interpretations or opinions. This difference of understanding exists not only between the saint and sinner, the elect and reprobate, but also among the saints themselves, or good men. Those, to a great extent result from early impressions and prejudices, and from varied temperament, &c. But to be definite, permit me to ask of you, what is truth in relation to the perpetuity of the Sabbath? taking into consideration the course pursued by those friends of

Christ who after attending to His burial returned to their homes, "and kept holy the seventh day according to the commandment;" and also the direction given by the Savior to His disciples in regard to the destruction of Jerusalem, when He said, "Pray ye that your flight be not in the winter, neither on the Sabbath day." To what extent is the moral law, so-called, binding? I saw in the SIGNS some time since, an article on this subject [the Sabbath,] by S. Trott, and recently another on the subject of the moral law. But I should think they did not perfectly harmonize. I wish for light.

"Again: What is truth in relation to the decree of God? Did He ordain all events that have taken place, and are to take place? And as many or most things occur or eventuate through a course of means, did He also ordain the means?

Do means or conditions appointed by God, and by Him associated with the results in man, leave events necessarily unfixed or uncertain with God? If Tyre and Sidon would have repented had they seen the mighty works which were done in Chorazin and Bethsaida, is it not possible that some who are now in the darkness of heathenism, might exercise the same kind of repentance, if the law of God, by which is the knowledge of sin, and the truths of the New Testament, through which God commandeth all men everywhere to repent, were declared unto them? And after determining what is truth in regard to these things, let me ask, what is duty in reference to the same?

"I ask not these questions to elicit a discussion, for I have neither disposition or competency to do so; I am no sage, but as a sincere inquirer after TRUTH."

It is at all times a pleasure to communicate what light we have to those who sincerely inquire after truth; but it is not unfrequently the case that those who inquire "What is Truth?" like Pilate, when he made this important inquiry of our Lord, turn away without waiting for an answer.

Our young friend is right in his conclusion that the testimony of the Scriptures is truth; but the bare testimony of the Bible does not fully embrace all that the question implies. Christ is emphatically The Truth, and He is that truth of which the Scriptures are a faithful record. The inquiry then, "What is Truth" amounts to the same, when thus proposed to our fellow-creatures, as

that expressed in the words, "What think ye of Christ?" We cannot give a full, appropriate answer to the one question, that will not with equal propriety apply to both. In reply, therefore, we say to our friend, it is our firm conviction and settled faith, that Christ is essentially die Truth of God, "the way, the truth, and the life." "The faithful and true witness; the Eternal Logos or Word, which was with God and was God; the Word which was made "flesh and dwelt among us;" and that "Light was the life of men." As the Word of God, He is the Truth of God and that Word by which regeneration is effected, by the communication made to them by the Spirit of that Light which was in Him, and which was the life of men.

The second inquiry is, "What is duty?" We answer, to "fear God and keep His commandments is the whole duty of man." In confirmation of this decision read Eccl. 12:13. In point of duty, then, it will be discovered that all mankind are delinquents when measured by the commandments of God, which are exceeding broad; for in our depraved state it is written, "there is no fear of God before their eyes." And again, "all have sinned;" and "by the deeds of the law no flesh shall be justified." Consequently there can be no just grounds to hope for acceptance with God upon the performance of duties.

"No works, no duties of our own,
Can for the smallest sins atone;
The robes which nature may provide,
Cannot our deep pollution hide."

It is true, as our friend remarks, there is much difference even among professors of religion in regard to duty, as well as in relation to the doctrine of the Scriptures; but every soul that is born of God, is led by the unerring Spirit of Truth to see himself a poor, lost, guilty, perishing, and helpless sinner, cut off from all prospect of salvation by any power or exertion which he can possibly make. His former system of duty-religion can avail him nothing while under such circumstances. Duty-faith, duty-repentance, duty-prayers, and duty-works, all serve only to press him down to the gates of death. In short, he may labor and toil for a law-righteousness until the commandment slays him at the feet of Sovereign Mercy, where his legal hopes all yield up the ghost, and there he is made acquainted with Christ as the resurrection and the life, the way, and the truth. Christ's blood is applied for the remission of his sins, and His perfect righteousness is applied for the justification of his soul, and he finds with joy and ecstasy of soul that

transforming grace which

"Changes a slave into a child,
And duty into choice."

At this important crises of his experience, he loses his burden and guilt, for all his sins and all his duties, and his own righteousness roll with Bunyan's Pilgrim's burden into the sepulchre, to return to him on more. Now old things with him are passed away, and all things have become new. He is now delivered from the law, and there is, therefore, now no condemnation to him, for he is now experimentally in Christ Jesus, and walks no more after the flesh, but after the Spirit; for the law of the Spirit of life, in Christ Jesus his Lord, has made him free from the law of sin, and whom the Son maketh free is free indeed.

The difference between the former and present condition is, formerly he was under a law that convicted him of sin and guilt, which required everything of him, but furnished him nothing; but now he is brought under the gospel, which requires nothing as a condition, but furnishes everything that his poor soul could want to make him perfectly happy and perfectly secure. His whole soul is now made to rejoice in Christ whose love is richly shed abroad in him. Nothing can to him now appear so lovely as his blessed Savior; nothing so desirable as to be found glorifying Him in the soul and body which are His. He cannot now be deterred from following Jesus. He is not inclined now to study how to pervert His examples, or to evade His commandments; he desires not to shun the reproaches of the cross, for he esteems them better than all the treasures of Egypt.

"Through floods and flames, if Jesus leads,
He'll follow where He goes.
Hinder me not' will be his cry.
Though earth and hell oppose."

"My sheep hear my voice," says Jesus, "and I know them, and they follow me." "A stranger they will not follow, for they know not the voice of strangers." In allegiance with Jesus as his King, it is his highest blessing to observe all things whatsoever He has commanded, and to walk in all his ordinances blameless, as did Zacharias and Elizabeth.

But to come to those particular points upon which light is sought by our

inquiring friend. "What is truth in relation to the perpetuity of the Sabbath," &c? In all candor we reply, the Sabbath in the letter or legal observance of it, as it was obligatory upon Israel under the legal dispensation, is abrogated, and with all other hand-writing of ordinances was nailed with the great Law-Fulfiller to the cross; blotted out and done away, so that the apostle Paul commands the church of God, "Let no man, therefore, judge you in meats, or in drinks, or in respect of a HOLY DAY; or of the new moon, or of the SABBATH DAYS; which are a shadow of good things to come, but the body is of Christ." "Touch not, taste not, handle not." Col. 2:14,16,17, & 21. But in relation to the spirit, or body, or substance, of which the legal Sabbath was a shadow, IT IS PERPETUAL. It consists not, however, in the seventh day, or a first day cessation from the ordinary pursuits of life, but in a COMPLETE cessation from ALL the servile works of the law, and entrance into rest. The law dispensation was the six days in which men were commanded to labor and do their work; but the gospel dispensation is the Sabbath of the Lord our God, and in it the saints are to cease from all their own works as God ceased from all the works which He had made, when He rested on the seventh day and hallowed it, and as Christ also, when He had-fulfilled the law, finished transgression and made an end of sin, rested from His own works as God did from the works of creation when He had finished them. As under the abrogated law men are not permitted to gather sticks, kindle fire, or perform any kind of labor, or think their own thoughts, or speak their own words, so under the gospel, those who believe and have entered into rest, according to Heb. 4:3, are not suffered to gather sticks and kindle fires; or, as your eastern people would say, make use of means to get a revival of religion, or by a system of duty-religion, to warm themselves into happy frames, or religious exercises. No manner of work shall be done, no burdens shall be borne upon the Sabbath day. Works are excluded, the saints are to live by faith upon the Son of God; rest on Him, rest upon His promises, His grace, His blood and righteousness. This glorious rest remaineth, or is perpetuated for the people of God; but God has sworn that those workmongers who hold on to the observance of blotted out hand-writings, and ordinances, nailed to the cross, they shall not enter into rest.

They are like the troubled sea, they cannot rest, they cannot cease from their own works. It is impossible to rest in Jesus, unless we believe IN Him; and faith is the GIFT of God. Arminians cannot rest; for the very faith which they profess to have, according to their own description of it, allows them no time to rest; they must work with might and main to get it, and then they must work to keep it; and while they have it in possession, it is as inanimate

as one of your Yankee spinning jennies; it can affect nothing for you except you exercise it!

But O how different with that faith of which Christ is the Author and Finisher! It works by love; instead of its being exercised by us, it exercises us, lays hold of the promises for us, overcomes the world for us, enters within the veil for us, and subdues kingdoms, works righteousness, obtains promises, stops the mouths of lions, quenches the violence of fire, delivers from the edge of the sword, out of weakness makes us strong, waxing valiant in fight, and turns to flight the armies of the aliens. What shall we say more? Time would fail to tell of Gideon, and of Barak, and of Samson, and of Jephthae, of David also, and Samuel, and of the prophets. Such is the vitality and power of the faith of God's elect; having this faith in us we have confidence in God; we trust in Him and are as Mount Zion which cannot be moved, but abideth forever. Without this faith none can know the blessings of a gospel Sabbath, this Sabbath of the Lord our God; this day which the Lord hath made, this Lord's Day, this glorious and perpetual Sabbath of rest unto all that have the faith which was once delivered the saints.

But we are requested to notice the Sabbath in connection with the circumstances of the saints observing the seventh day Sabbath, after the burial of the crucified body of our Lord, and of Christ's direction to the saints to pray that their flight should not be on the Sabbath day, &c.

In regard to the first circumstance, we would remark that the disciples were not delivered from the obligation to keep the law of Moses, until the resurrection of Christ; for although He had fulfilled every precept, and borne its penalty in His death, put away sin, and made an end of transgression, &c., yet He must rise again from the dead for their justification. As they were buried with Him by baptism (immersion) into death, and after the similitude of baptism raised with Him, through the faith of the operation of God, who hath raised Him from the dead. Christ suffered for His people as their Head, and in that relation to them, they, in regard to the demands of law and justice, suffered and were dead and buried with or in Him, so that when He was raised up by the glory of the Father, they were raised with Him to newness of life. No longer to serve under the letter of the law, but to worship God in the newness of the spirit. It must be borne in mind that Christ came to redeem them that were under the law, and to this end came Himself under the law, and remained under the law until the resurrection from the dead. This accounts satisfactorily, we would think, for the disciples' keeping the

Sabbath day, which elapsed while Christ was in the tomb, according to the commandment of Moses, which was still binding upon them at that time.

The instruction to the disciples to pray that their flight from the fearful calamities of Jerusalem might not take place upon the Sabbath day, is urged by the advocates of a perpetual obligation to keep a seventh day Sabbath, as evidence that our Lord taught the perpetuity of that obligation after he had nailed the hand-writing of ordinances to His cross.

But on examination other sufficient cause will be found to warrant that admonition. It was named incidentally with some other things, which might be serious hindrances to their precipitate flight, in which any hindrance might involve them in the most dreadful calamities. This admonition no more implies that their flight on the Sabbath day would be a violation of the law, than the other circumstances named in verses 19 and 20 of Matthews 24; but because, like the other difficulties named, this, should it so occur, might prove a serious hindrance to their flight. Indeed, the reason is assigned by our Lord in the very next verse: "For then shall be great tribulation, such as was not since the beginning of the world" up to that date, and hence the necessity that they should be prepared instantly, at the signal which He would give them to take their flight.

If any were circumstanced so as to prevent immediate flight, though this would violate no precept of the law, yet at that moment it would involve them in woe. Or if the flight should be in the winter, which of course could not be overruled by them, it would make it difficult for them to speed their flight; or if on the Sabbath day, the seventh day of the week, which the Jews were at that time very tenacious for the sanctity of, should they attempt a flight, they would subject themselves to an arrest by legal administrators of the Jewish law, according to the usage of the Jews at that time. Up to the very day in which Jerusalem was overthrown, the Pharisees sat in Moses' seat, and enjoined a strict observance of the seventh day Sabbath, and would arrest any offender, just as the authorities of Connecticut formerly did those whom they caught traveling on the FIRST day, which they said had, by some means or other, taken the place of the seventh; and thus it would prove a serious hindrance to their flight.

Is it not astonishing that the aversion of the hearts of men who profess to be the followers of Christ, should be so great to the plain declarations of the Scriptures, as to lead them to pervert such passages as these, so as to make

them seem to conflict with the testimony of the inspired apostles of Jesus Christ, who by the immediate inspiration of the Holy Ghost declared that the ordinances of Sabbath days were blotted out and nailed to the cross, as shadows of which Christ was the body or substance. As to the day being CHANGED from the SEVENTH to the FIRST, there is NOT the least shadow or trace of authority for such a change in the Bible. If, as some have contended, the obligation was moral and not ceremonial, and therefore perpetual, the same argument, if it could be established, would also FORBID the change, for moral statutes are as immutable as they are perpetual, and therefore they cannot change.

As to what appeared to our correspondent as a discrepancy in Brother Trott's communication on the Sabbath and then on the law, perhaps the further development of his views in this and the last number of the SIGNS, may obviate the difficulty; but if not, he will please hereafter state particularly wherein he apprehended a want of harmony.

"Again: What is Truth in relation to the DECREES OF GOD?" We reply, in our opinion ALL that God has said upon this subject, as well as ALL that He has said upon all other subjects, is TRUTH; and He has "declared the end from the beginning, and from ancient times the things that are not yet done, saying, My counsel SHALL stand, and I WILL DO ALL MY PLEASURE;" (Isa. 46:10) and he "worketh ALL THINGS after the counsel of His own will." (Eph. 1:11).

These Scriptures are sufficient to establish the point, that God governs and controls ALL THINGS, and that His government of all events and things is in strict accordance with His fixed, immutable and eternal purpose, counsel or decree, from the flight of a sparrow, the falling of a hair from our head, up to the most important events which involve the destiny of kingdoms and worlds.

"Did He ordain all events that have taken place, and are to take place?" Yes, as certain as it is that HE IS GOD. If an event has ever transpired over which He had no government, then such events may also yet take place independently of His government; and if one such event can or has taken place, millions may follow, and by such an admission we should be hurled into absolute atheism; for if He is God, He is just such a God as He has declared Himself to be, and has all power in heaven and on earth, governs and controls all beings, all destinies and all events, and causes the wrath of

man to praise Him, and the remainder of wrath He restrains. He "forms the light and creates darkness, makes peace and creates evil;" for He has said, "I the Lord do ALL these things." And all the things which He does, He works "according to the counsel of His own will," as we have already proved.

"And as many or most things occur or eventuate through a course of means, did He also ordain the means?" Things which are brought about in the providence of God, or by virtue of His universal government, bear an intimate relation to and are connected with each other, like the revolving wheels in a complicated machine; and to the imperfect vision of poor finite mortals, these revolutions may seem to conflict, yet in the wisdom of God they work together in harmony. Those which to us seem most trivial, are with God as important as any other of the events connected in the system of government; and He who is the Maker and Builder of all things, who has declared the end or issue of all things, has secured, by immutable decree, a revenue of glory in the result of all things, which He will not give to another, nor His praise unto graven images. What we call "means" are "things," and belong to and are embraced in the "all things" which He governs and controls. Hence what we may call means are the results of the decrees of God, as well as those things that are effected by them. For instance, the death of Christ was an event which, for magnitude, challenges a comparison with all other events. It took place according to the decree of God, as all are compelled to admit, and yet that very death was a means connected with other events to be effected by it. "That by MEANS of death, for the REDEMPTION of the transgressions that were under the first testament, they which are called might receive the PROMISE of eternal life." (Heb. 9:15) The treachery of Joseph's brethren was a "means" to induce them to murder him; their avarice, and the providential appearance of the Ishmaelites, were the "means" which induced them to change their purpose and sell him; this sale was the "means" of His going down to Egypt; the wickedness of Potiphar's wife was the "means" of Joseph's imprisonment; his imprisonment was the "means" of procuring an opportunity of interpreting the dreams of the butler and baker; and this was in turn the "means" of his appearing before Pharaoh, which was the "means" of his promotion, which was the "means" of laying up corn, and this was the "means" ultimately of bringing about the interpretation of Joseph's dreams, which had been the "means" of first moving the enmity of his brethren against him, and all this was the "means" of preserving Jacob's family alive through the famine; and that preservation was connected as a "means" of a Savior's visit to the world, for out of Judah came forth a Deliverer, to turn away ungodliness from Jacob. Can our

correspondent, or can any other being, tell which of these events were unimportant, or which, if any of them, might have been dispensed with without breaking the chain of causes and results of "means" of ends to be accomplished? If the results were ordained, of course the means were also equally ordained as the result of other means or causes which produced them.

"Do means or conditions appointed by God, and by Him associated with the result in man, leave events necessarily unfixed or uncertain with God?" Certainly not. But why ASSOCIATE means AND conditions in the statement of the question? There is NO AFFINITY between them. Every event that has ever occurred, from the creation of the world to the present day, has been ordained means of bringing about other events, which, in their turn, are also means bearing upon other; BUT CONDITIONS are very different things. When God sent Moses and Aaron with "conditions" of peace to Pharaoh, saying, "Let my people Israel go," and threatening with judgments if those terms were not promptly complied with, He told Moses that He would "harden Pharaoh's heart," so that he would not let Israel go until He should execute His judgments on Egypt. So the statement of conditions in His case did not hide from His eye the end or result.

And when God gave a conditional covenant to the nation of Israel, embracing temporal blessings and curses on "conditions" of obedience or disobedience, if we admit that God is Omniscient, we must admit that He knew precisely how these conditions would be treated by, and what effect they would have upon those unto whom they were given; consequently it was impossible they should render the result indefinite or uncertain with Him. But let it be distinctly understood, that although the covenant which is now abrogated, which was typical, and which provided only for temporal blessings and curses, was conditional, that the covenant of salvation is "ordered in ALL THINGS and sure;" not "yea" and "nay," but "yea" and "amen," to the glory of God by us. There is NOT A CONDITION stated or intimated in all the Scriptures, either directly or indirectly, expressed or implied, wherein God has offered, proffered, or proposed to save a sinner from the condemnation of the law, or from the just penalty thereof, upon ANY CONDITION, of any kind whatever; for all that are saved, or ever were or ever shall be delivered from the wrath and condemnation, are "saved, and called with a holy calling; not according to their works, but according to His purpose and grace, which was given to them in Christ Jesus before the world began."

They are blessed with all spiritual blessings according "as God has chosen us in Him before the foundation of the world; having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ, unto Himself, according to the good pleasure of His will, wherein He hath made us accepted in the Beloved." (Eph. 1:4-6)

"If Tyre and Sidon would have repented, had they seen the mighty works which were done in Chorazin and Bethsaida, is it not possible that some who are now in the darkness of heathenism, might exercise the same kind of repentance, if the law of God, by which is the knowledge of sin, and the truths of the New Testament, through which God commands all men everywhere to repent, were declared unto them?"

If things were otherwise than what they are, we confess our utter inability to say what they would be; but of this we are fully satisfied, if one link of the chain of cause and effects, which God in infinite wisdom has linked together, could possibly be broken, we should be in a deplorable condition; results unlooked for and unprovided for might then surprise God Himself, and world on world might dash, until all would sink to utter ruin. The supreme theme of our devoutness joy is that **THE LORD REIGNS**; but if we, or any combination of power in heaven, earth, or hell, could, by sending a Bible or a missionary, or anything else, into heathen lands, (if indeed there be any other land to which that designation more appropriately belongs than it does to this land of Bibles and of boasted light,) could bring about the accomplishment of any event that was not provided for in the eternal, unchangeable, and invincible decree of God, by the accomplishment of such a work, we would disprove all the record God has given of Himself.

Why did not the same cause which would have produced repentance in Tyre and Sidon, produce that effect on the cities **WHERE IT EXISTED**? (It did not upon Chorazin and Bethsaida!) And why was it not employed in those cities which for the absence of it were destroyed? Or is it proper for us to inquire why God has made one vessel unto honor and another unto dishonor? Can our correspondent tell?

It is truly by the law that a knowledge of sin is sent home to the conviction of quickened souls; but if a knowledge of the mere letter or reading of the precepts of the Old Testament could effect that conviction, why was Saul of Tarsus without such conviction until he undertook his journey to the city of

Damascus? And why are not American sinners, who abound in Bibles, convicted of sin? That very Bible of which we speak declares the reason; because that it should be the peculiar work, not of the Bible simply, but of that Spirit which Jesus should send, to convince "of sin, of righteousness, and of judgment to come;" and when the Spirit executes this work, He employs the law, and brings the commandment home to the sinner's heart in its spirituality, and sin revives, and the sinner is slain.

If it were the purpose or pleasure of God that those regions of the earth which are called "heathen," should have that kind of repentance which Tyre and Sidon would have had, if God had been pleased to give it to them, or any other kind of repentance, they would assuredly have it; for He doeth His pleasure in heaven, and among the inhabitants of the earth; He taketh up an island as a very little thing, and nations before Him are as the drop of the bucket. None can stay His hand; He speaketh the word and it stands fast; He commandeth and it is done.

"And after determining What is truth in regard to these things, let me ask, What is duty in reference to the same?" In consideration of all the grand, magnificent and sublime things contemplated in the foregoing questions and replies, it is certainly becoming that we should "be still and know that He is God." "What the law saith, it saith to them that are under the law," and we conclude, therefore, that it is the duty of those who are under the law, and the delightful and inexpressible blessing of those who are delivered from the curse and bondage of the law, and brought into the glorious liberty of the sons of God, to believe all that God has said to them respectively, and to obey ALL that He commands; and, as we have said before, this comprehends the whole duty of man.

**ELECTION, REDEMPTION, AND
INTERCESSION OF CHRIST
By: W.W. Hudson**

ALL THE ELECT SHALL BE SAVED.

We believe the Scriptures teach that all of those for whom Jesus died shall be brought to the knowledge of the truth, and not one shall be lost. "For I came down from heaven, not to do mine own will, but the will of Him that

sent me, And this is the Father's will which hath sent me, that of all which He hath given me I should lose nothing, but should raise it up again at the last day." (John 6:39-39) Do not these words of Jesus prove that all of the elect shall be saved? This Scripture shows that all those that God the Father has GIVEN to Jesus to be His bride or body, SHALL be saved. (I Peter 1:2) "My sheep hear my voice, and I know them and they follow me: And I GIVE unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand. My Father, which GAVE THEM ME, is greater than all; and no man is able to pluck them out of my Father's hand." (John 10:27-29)

Even though Satan or the devil is walking about as a roaring lion and seeking whom he may devour; (I Peter 5:8) he may trouble you and cause you to be cast down, it is a comfort to know that the Lord keeps you by His mighty power. (I Peter 1:5)

Even though you may experience days of darkness, and experience times when you cannot feel the presence of the Lord, and experience times when you wonder if the love of God is in your heart, it is a great comfort to know there is nothing that can separate you from the love of God. "For I am persuaded, that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, not powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord." (Romans 8:38-39)

"Being confident of this very thing, that He which hath begun a good work in you will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ." (Phil. 1:6) Do you believe this Scripture is true and shows that the Lord remembers and keeps all His People?

Do you believe the intercession of Christ is effectual? Do you believe that the children of God will come out of the world in due time? "And I heard another voice from heaven, saying, Come out of her, my people, that ye be not partakers of her sins, and that ye receive not of her plagues." (Rev. 18:4) "Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean: and I will receive you, and will be a Father unto you, and ye shall be my sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty. (II Cor. 6:17-18; Heb. 6: 4-6)

We believe those Scriptures advocate that it is IMPOSSIBLE for those who have been enlightened and taught by the Spirit of God to fall away and be

lost. Can you not see that the above Scriptures are sufficient evidence to prove that all of the elect shall be saved?

CHRIST DIED ONLY FOR THE ELECT. "I am the good shepherd: the good shepherd giveth His life for the SHEEP." (John 10:11) The sheep does not mean all of the human race, but it does have reference to those whom God has ELECTED to eternal life. "ELECT according to the freknowledge of God the Father," (I Peter 1:2)

"And I will pray the Father, and He shall give you another Comforter, that He may abide with you FOR EVER; even the Spirit of truth; whom the world CANNOT receive, because it seeth Him not, neither knoweth Him: but ye know Him; for He dwelleth WITH you, and shall be IN you." (John 14:16-17) Since the Holy Ghost dwells with the elect, do you believe that Jesus died for them? Since the world cannot receive the Spirit of truth or

Holy Ghost, do you believe that Jesus died for them? Why?

"For God so loved the world, that He GAVE (not offered) His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life." (John 3:16) Do you believe that the word "world" in this Scripture means all of the human race? At this point, let us quote John 17:9: "I pray for them: I pray NOT for the world, but for them which thou halt given me; for they are thine." (John 17:9) Do you believe that Jesus prays for those that He loves? Do you believe that Jesus prays for those for whom He died? Why did Jesus refuse to pray for the world? Do you believe that this Scripture is sufficient evidence to prove that Jesus did not die for all mankind?

"And all that dwell upon the earth shall worship him, whose names are not written in the book of life of the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world." (Rev. 13:8)

Please notice that this Scripture shows that those whose names are NOT written in the book of life DO worship the beast. This means that those whose names ARE written in the book of life do NOT worship the beast, satan and this world. Do you believe that Jesus died for those whose names are NOT written in the book of life? Is not this Scripture proof or evidence that Jesus died only for those whose names are written in the book of life of the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world?

Jesus prays only for, or intercedes for His people. "I pray for THEM: I pray

NOT for the WORLD, but FOR THEM which THOU HAST GIVEN ME: for they are thine." (John 17:9) This Scripture tells us the ones for whom Jesus prays. Jesus prays or intercedes for the children of God, for whom He has shed His precious blood. "For both He that sanctifieth and they who are sanctified are all of one: for which cause He is not ashamed to call them brethren." (Heb. 2:11) This Scripture shows that both Jesus and the church are all of one, and that the Lord has sanctified the elect or called them out and separated them from the ways of the world, and made them holy. Therefore Jesus prays for His brethren.

The church is spoken of as the body of Christ. "For we are members of His body, of His flesh, and of His bones." (Ephesians 5:30) Does this Scripture show that Jesus prays for the members of His body? " ... He maketh intercession for the SAINTS according to the will of God." (Romans 8:27)

"Neither pray I for these alone, but for them also which SHALL BELIEVE on me through their word." (John 17: 20) Does not this Scripture show that Jesus is not only praying for those who have been brought to the knowledge of the truth and who have been quickened and made alive by the Spirit of God; but also for those who shall know the truth in the future? Do you believe that foreknowledge and predestination is taught in this Scripture? It does not say, those who might believe, but those "which SHALL believe." Briefly, all of the elect shall believe in Jesus at that appointed time known only to the Lord. They shall believe because the Spirit of God teaches them and gives them the wisdom to understand the deep things of God. "But of Him are ye in Christ Jesus, who of God is made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption." (1 Cor. 1:30 and I Cor. 2: 7-10)

Dear reader, do you believe the above Scriptures are sufficient evidence to show that Jesus intercedes only for the elect?

WANTED: The Predestinarian desires copies of 1980 minutes of associations for our library collection. Also, we would appreciate old back issues too.

TITHES, OFFERINGS, OBLATIONS
By: S.C. Phillips

Among Old School Baptist churches, there is one subject on which there has

been universal agreement throughout our long history: — a guarded view of tithing. Never once have we found any of the churches of Jesus Christ bound to a hireling ministry, nor to the lucrative tithe which is necessary to maintain a career-oriented, or professional ministry. From the beginning for Baptists in America, it has been a matter of conviction in that tithing is dangerous to both the truth and religious freedom. As Roger Williams said before the court in 1652, "He that makes a TRADE OF PREACHING, that makes the cure of souls and the charge of men's eternal welfare a TRADE, a maintenance, a living, and that explicitly makes a covenant or bargain ... the Son of God never sent ..." (A Hireling Ministry None of Christ.) And, Obadiah Holmes said he was a "craftsman" or artisan or "farmer," so that he not be guilty of "making a trade out of preaching." In Isaac Backus' letter to George Washington urging religious freedom be annexed to the United States Constitution by amendments, he stated, "religious ministers when supported by force are the most dangerous men on earth."

Thus, the question of tithing began to expand itself during the rise of the Modern Missionary Movement in the 1830's. But, tithing was not forcefully advocated until the first two generations of apostacized Baptists had passed away. By 1900, however, tithing among some Baptists began to gain momentum.

Today, millions actually believe and practice tithing; hoping to commend this "will-worship" to God. It is our intention in this article to set forth, and to defend, the historic position of the church of Jesus Christ on this subject. First, we will deal with the Levitical practice; second, the negative arguments; and thirdly, the positive aspects of ministerial support.

Firstly, tithing is a Jewish practice under the Law of Moses, as commanded of God. The first mention of tithes is given in Genesis 14:20, where Abraham paid tithes to Melchizedec. It is noteworthy, that Abraham paid tithes, not of his own substance, but of the spoils of war against the five kings of Canaan.

Under the law of Moses, the land of Canaan was divided among the tribes of Israel. Jacob gave a double portion to Joseph through his sons, Manasseh and Ephraim, thus in reality creating thirteen tribes. (Genesis 48:17) In the subsequent division of the land, Manasseh and Ephraim each received a land grant or state. But Levi and his sons which made up the Levitical priesthood were scattered throughout the other twelve tribes. They were given certain

cities with their suburban areas and the tithe. Thus, God said "And, behold, I have given the children of Levi ALL the TENTH in Israel FOR AN INHERITANCE, for their service which they serve, even the service of the tabernacle of the congregation." (Numbers 18:21) By His commandment the tithe belonged to Levi so long as the Levitical priesthood served.

A favorite text used by Arminian ministers to injoin tithing upon their congregations is : "Will a man rob God? Yet ye have robbed me. But ye say, Wherein have we robbed thee? In tithes and offerings." (Malachi 3:8) It is robbery to seize upon the property of another unlawfully; and especially serious is it when God Himself has given it as an undeniable inheritance. This text clearly charges the Jews with robbing God when they refused to pay their tithe to LEVI; for the children of Levi had performed the services required and were rightly and divinely due their promised reward for this service. But, it is NOT required for Gentiles nor children of grace who are not under the legal dispensation to pay a tithe to Levi. If it were, then it would equally be a sin to pay it to any other than Levi to whom it belonged.

The tithe was Levi's by the legal requirement of the Law which God gave to Israel. It covered far more than ten percent of one's money. In addition to the tithe, the oblations (freewill offerings) and certain portions of the sacrifices were also given Levi. An "oblation" is a "freewill offering" and often called such in the Law. It is giving of one's own offering freely of his own volition. It goes beyond the tithe which could not be legally withheld. (Leviticus 22:18-23) The whole subject is very extensive, so for brevity we must forebear to deal with it here.

God's attitude towards the sacrifices and oblations after Christ' OFFERING (which they typified) is prophetically given in Isa. 66:3 : "He that killeth an ox is as if he slew a man; he that sacrificeth a lamb, as if he cut off a dog's neck; he that offereth AN OBLATION, as if he offered swine's blood; he that burneth incense, as if he blessed an idol. Yea, they have CHOSEN THEIR OWN WAYS, and their soul delighteth IN THEIR ABOMINATIONS." Notice that God considers the dog and the swine to be unclean beasts — How can He then respect the tithe and "offering," or "oblation?" Members of Christ body cannot burn incense, allow their children to commit such sacrilege, nor pay tithes and offerings "to the Lord."

In reality, the tithes and oblations, (or freewill offerings) were ordained of God as a tax upon the twelve tribes to maintain His legal government among

the Jews, AND to typify the sacrificial offering of Jesus Christ. In the former sense, it is as our own national tax, with the exception that ours may not be given to support a state religion. Thus, in that sense, all of us pay tithes, and far in excess of a tenth in most cases! The tithes and offerings were Levi's portion, seeing that he was excluded from the partitioning of Canaan. God granted it to him and to his family, and required it of all other tribes. A point is made that under the New Testament, no tribes exist, nor are ministers deprived of lands or wealth any more or less than others.

Secondly, the negative arguments: A favorite text of the hireling ministry in support of a money-based religion is found in Matthew 23:23: "Woe unto you, SCRIBES AND PHARISEES, HYPOCRITES! for ye pay TITHE of mint and anise and cummin, and have omitted the weightier matters OF THE LAW, judgment, mercy, and faith: these OUGHT YE TO HAVE DONE, and not to leave the other undone." This is the ONLY New Testament Scripture commanding tithing. (The text in Hebrews cannot be so applied.) It is all they have; and it seems sufficient! Yet, Jesus in speaking to the "scribes, Pharisees, and hypocrites," who were JEWS; shows that tithing is under the law; and that they had broken it! But in no wise can an honest man apply this to non-Jews. Jews WERE REQUIRED to give Levi his tithes. We are not so required. Besides, would any dare lump Pharisees and hypocrites with the elect of God?

The concept of tithing and offerings has been so well indoctrinated among religious people today that when one of them reads, or preaches upon "collections," the mind quickly makes the connection with "tithes and offerings." Hence, this text is so understood: "Now concerning the COLLECTION FOR THE SAINTS, as I have given order to the churches of Galatia, even so do ye. Upon the FIRST DAY of the week let every one of you LAY BY HIM IN STORE, as God hath prospered him, that there be no GATHERING WHEN I COME." (I Corinthians 16:1-2)

We need not say much to that! The text no more teaches tithing than it teaches changing the Jewish Sabbath to the First Day of the week! (Incidentally the purpose given for "laying by him in store on the first day of the week" is that "there should be no gathering" when Paul came. Knowing the nature of preachers, it is rather too much to believe that Paul, a servant of Jesus Christ, a father to the Corinthian church, would not arrange to be there on their day of worship!) It simply declares that the collection for the poor saints which was during the great "dearth throughout the world" during the

"days of Claudius Caesar" should be laid by for its gathering when he and those with him arrived. (Acts 11:28-30) The gathering was to be upon the First Day of the week, and if this was a new Sabbath day, then such a gathering would have been a violation of the law of the Sabbath. It is nowhere commanded that the churches of Christ are to take up a collection each First Day for the next 1900 years, for this was to be done prior to Paul's arrival in the area. (It would be hard to resist a further comment: It was NOT for ministerial support, cooperative programs, missions, hospitals, stocks and bonds, and such things which are now advocated! It was for the RELIEF of the saints!)

Tithing is a NEW PRACTICE, and is root and branch to the Modern Missionary Movement. It is condemned in the following Scriptures:

1. Speaking of those who would bring in damnable heresies, such as Arminianism, Peter wrote: "And through covetousness shall they with FEIGNED WORDS MAKE MERCHANDISE of you: whose judgment now of a long time lingereth not, and their damnation slumbereth not which have forsaken the right way, and are gone astray, following the way of BALAAM of Bosor, WHO LOVED THE WAGES OF UNRIGHTEOUSNESS." (II Pet. 2:3,15)

2. Jude wrote of those "certain men crept in unawares, who were before of old ordained to this condemnation, ungodly men, turning the grace of God into lasciviousness, and denying the only Lord God, and our Lord Jesus Christ" and says of them: "Woe unto them! for they have gone the way of Cain, and ran GREEDILY AFTER THE ERROR OF BALAAM FOR REWARD, and perished in the GAINSAYINGS OF CORE. These are spots in your feasts of charity (love-feasts), when they feast with you, FEEDING THEMSELVES without fear" (Jude 11,12) And what is the error of Balaam? He was willing to curse Israel, or PROPHECY against him, for reward; but God stopped him and turned his cursings into blessings err they left his mouth! (Numbers, chapters 22 & 23) And, What is the connection between Balaam and Core (Korah) ? Korah taught (as modern hirelings) that anyone had a right to prophesy whether he was called of God or not. (Numbers 16) Thus the Scriptures connect unholy ministers with greed over filthy lucre.

It ought to be expected, for why else would an unsanctified man "preach." The Scriptures says: "Buy the truth and sell -it not." (Proverbs 23:23) Ministers are to "freely give as they freely received." What grateful man will

sell a gift?

3. John wrote to the church at Pergamos "where Satan's seat is" (Rev. 2:13) and rebuked them. One of the things Christ had against that church was "because thou hast there them that hold the DOCTRINE OF BALAAM." (vs. 14)

4. When Mystery Babylon, that false religion of the antichrist shall fall, it is written: "And the MERCHANTS of the earth shall weep and mourn over her, for

NO MAN BUYETH THEIR MERCHANDISE ANY MORE." (Rev. 18:11)

"And the fruits that thy SOUL LUSTED AFTER are departed from thee, and all things which were dainty and goodly are departed from thee, and thou shalt find them no more at all. The MERCHANTS of these things, which were MADE RICH BY HER, shall stand afar off for fear of her torment, weeping and wailing." (Rev. 18:14-15).

5. It is God alone who calls and qualifies His ministers, and if any are called of Him they will be found having His qualifications. All others, not having these qualifications "run when they have not been sent" and are guilty of the sin of Korah (Numbers 16:3)

Of all the qualifications of God-called men, one is: "not greedy of filthy lucre." (I Tim. 3:3 and Titus 1:7) Seeing there is no New Testament Scripture that teaches tithing, we conclude it to be un Scriptural and not to be taught or practiced in the church of Jesus Christ. In fact, the church has NEVER held such a view, not even to this day.

Thirdly, ministerial support: We maintain that the support of the gospel ministry is an act of free and sovereign grace. In fact, it is sometimes called "grace;" and if it is of grace then it is NOT of works or duty!

"Moreover, brethren, we do you to wit of the GRACE of God bestowed on the churches of Macedonia; How that in a great trial of affliction the abundance of their joy and their deep poverty abounded unto the riches of their LIBERALITY . . . Praying us with much entreaty that we would receive the GIFT, and take upon us the fellowship of the MINISTERING TO THE SAINTS." (II Cor. 8:1-2,4)

Notice that the motive for giving liberally for the ministering to the poor saints IS THE GRACE OF GOD. It was also "to the saints" this liberality was extended, and this was a desire that they be included in the "fellowship

of the ministering to the saints" along with others. It demonstrates that the moving cause was grace; and motivated by the "abundance of their joy," (even though in carnal things were in deep poverty) which then abounded unto the riches of their liberality. It is noteworthy that the apostle had to be "entreated" to receive their gift, for he knew of their deep poverty. How unlike modern "ministers" for hire!

Paul cited the example of these Macedonians and the grace bestowed upon them to exhort the church of God at Corinth to do the same, saying: "And herein I give advice: for this is expedient for you, who have begun before, not only to do, but also to be forward a year ago. Now therefore perform the doing of it; that as there was a readiness TO WILL, so there may be a performance also out of that WHICH YE HAVE." (II Cor. 8:10-11) Following is a simple principle for ministering to the saints, to wit, "For if there be first a willing mind, it is accepted according to that a man hath, not according to that he hath not. For I mean not that other men be eased, and ye be burdened: but by an equality, that now at this time your abundance may be a supply for their want, that there may be equality." (verse 12-14)

Paul told the elders at Ephesus how he had . . . "shewed you all things, how that so laboring ye (ministers) ought to support the weak, and to remember the words of the Lord Jesus, how He said, `It is more blessed to give than to receive.'" (Acts 20:35)

All the above relates exclusively to our "ministering to the saints," and seems to have reference to the same "collection for the saints" during the dearth that "came upon the whole earth." That this willingness to perform and to will was of GRACE is beyond doubt; and that the gift given is termed "grace" is made clear by verse 6, "Insomuch that we desired Titus, that as he had begun, so he would also finish in you the same GRACE also."

We realize that those who believe in tithing must catch at any straw to support their view, and this text is often so used. But to the church, grace is the moving cause of their liberality to give aid to those in need among them; and according to Scripture this should be by equality according to what a man has. None of us desire our brethren with less means to feel it as a burden or necessity beyond their ability. This, other than the unscripturalness of it, is our basic objection to tithing. It places an unwarranted and unreasonable guilt upon those who are less fortunate in this

world's goods.

That the Scriptures are not silent relative to ministerial support is clear, but tithing is NOT the Biblical method should be equally clear. The Scriptures DO teach ministerial support as we shall now see.

"Who goeth a warfare any time at his OWN CHARGE? Who planteth a vineyard, and eateth not of the fruit thereof? Or who feedeth a flock, and eateth not of the milk of the flock?" (I Cor. 9:7) All these things are reasonable. But balance is given in the Scriptures to prevent career-professionals from claiming such as a "right." "Feed the flock of God which is among you, taking the oversight, not by CONSTRAINT, but willingly; NOT FOR FILTHY LUCRE, but of a ready mind; neither as being lords over God's heritage, but being EXAMPLES to the flock." (I Pet. 5:2,3) Should the above Scriptures seem to imply the hiring of ministers, then compare: "And let OURS also learn to MAINTAIN GOOD WORKS FOR NECESSARY USES, that they be not unfruitful." (Titus 3:14) Paul labored in Corinth, "and because he was of the same craft, he abode with them (Aquila and Priscilla) and WROUGHT: for by their occupation they were tentmakers." (Acts 18:3)

Later, writing to the Corinthian church after it was established, he said: "Have I committed an offense in abasing myself that ye might be exalted, because I have preached to you the gospel FREELY? I robbed other churches, taking WAGES of them, to do you service. And when I was present with you, and WANTED, I was chargeable to no man: for that which was LACKING TO ME the brethren which came from Macedonia supplied: and in all I have kept myself from being burdensome unto you, and so will I keep myself." (II Cor. 11:7-9) Continuing in I Cor. 9, "For it is written in the law of Moses, Thou shalt not muzzle the mouth of the ox that treadeth out the corn. Doeth God take care for the oxen? (verse 9) The implication of the question's answer is found in its contextual argument, i.e., "No, God does not tend the oxen. Its owner feeds it." "Or saith He it altogether for OUR SAKE? For our sake, no doubt, this is written: That he that ploweth should plow in hope; and he that thresheth in hope should be partaker of his hope. If we have sown unto you spiritual things, is it a great thing if we shall reap your CARNAL things? If others be partakers of this power over you, are not we rather? Nevertheless we have NOT USED this power: but suffer all things, LEST we should HINDER the gospel of Christ. Do ye not know that they which minister about holy things live of the temple? and they which

wait at the altar are partakers with the altar? Even so hath the Lord ORDAINED THAT THEY WHICH PREACH THE GOSPEL SHOULD LIVE OF THE GOSPEL." (I Cor. 9:10-14)

Most Predestinarian Old School Baptist churches are exceedingly weak in this age in comparison with past ages. Few of them can supply the needs of their ministers. In the past, prior to the rise of the Modern Missionary Movement some churches had the problem of ministers serving for "filthy lucre". Some elders went to the churches which supported them better; having not the care of the flock at heart, and were termed "stay short preachers" — that is, they migrated to greener pastures. But since the expulsion of the Modern Baptists, the Old School churches have been saved from the practice. Most, if not all, elders among us prefer to work for the same reasons Paul gave for his working. "For yourselves know how ye ought to follow us: for we behaved not ourselves disorderly among you; Neither did we eat any man's bread for nought; but WROUGHT WITH LABOR and travail night and day, that we might not be CHARGEABLE to any of you: Not because we have not this power, but to make ourselves an ENSAMPLE unto you to follow us." (II Thess. 3:7-12)

There is danger in both extremes. Those churches which maintain ministers sometimes find that they serve their own bellies, and not the flock. It is almost universal among them that ministers are "not of them" and wander aimlessly around from church to church throughout their ministry. Such are the hireling ministers, and by this practice they are recognizable. On the other hand, among us, far too many take for granted that the elders have no additional burden in the ministry than what it takes to travel.

The neglect of the Corinthians in this matter is touched upon by Paul in a defense of his apostleship; he said: "For what is it wherein ye were inferior to other churches, except it be that I myself was NOT BURDENSOME to you? Forgive me this wrong." (II Thess. 12:13.

**AN INTERNAL CALL By:
Isaac Backus, 1753**

One very great means that God has been pleased to make use of from the beginning for the recovery and salvation of lost men, has been the preaching of His Word. And therefore in every age He has called and set apart particular

men for that purpose. Jude speaks of Enoch's prophesying, (Jude 14). And Noah is called a preacher of righteousness, (II Peter 2:5). And we are told that "God at sundry times and in divers manners spake in times past unto the fathers by the prophets," (Heb. 1:1) And in latter times, "though the preaching of the Cross is to them that perish foolishness: yet unto them that are saved, it is the power of God." (I Cor. 1:18)

Hence it is a truth allowed in general by all persuasions, that the public preaching of the Word is an ordinance of divine appointment. But there is a great diversity of sentiment about how men are to be qualified and introduced into this great work. Multitudes place their qualifications more in human learning than in divine enlightening, and place their AUTHORITY more in being externally called and set apart by MEN, than in being internally called by the Spirit of God. Yea, many seem to make no account of the latter, but set it aside as an extraordinary thing, not to be expected in these days. And the main argument that is commonly brought to prove this is, that the Bible is completed, and the days of inspiration are ceased; therefore to hold that any are by the Spirit and power of God in these days, called and sent forth into this work, this they say is giving heed to new revelations: for it is nowhere expressed in Scripture that this or that man is, or ever will be, called to preach the Gospel. But though I believe with all my heart that the canon of the Scripture is full, and that there is a curse denounced against any that shall add to or diminish from it, (Rev. 22:18, 19): yet I am far from thinking that it is just to conclude from hence that the Lord does not in these days as really call and DIRECT His servants by HIS SPIRIT as He did in old time: yea, to deny this is to contradict a great part of the Scriptures, as I trust will hereafter be made to appear. This argument the Papists and many others make use of against "assurance", and it is as good there as here; for it is no more recorded in Scripture that this or that man in our day is or ever shall be converted than it is that any person is, or shall be called to preach the Gospel.

But the truth is, the Scriptures are given as our ONLY PERFECT RULE, "which is able to build us up, and to give us an inheritance among all them which are sanctified, through faith which is in Christ Jesus." (Acts 20:32; II Tim.3:15) And it is the Spirit of God, and that alone that enlightens our minds to understand His word aright, and that shows men their condition and their duty, and guides His people into all truth. (John 16) When He sets home the law upon a sinner's conscience, he is made to know that he is a guilty soul before God, as certainly as if his name was expressed in God's

sacred book: for it lays open his particular sins, and charges them home upon his conscience with power; and thus the Word of God is "a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart." (Heb.4:12) So when a soul has a discovery of Christ he sees Him not only to be a Savior in general, but also that He is just such a Savior as he needs, and God's language to such as find grace in the wilderness is, "Yea, I have loved thee with an everlasting love, therefore with loving kindness have I drawn thee." (Jere. 31:2-3) I know there has been much dispute in our day on this point, i.e., "Whether the first act of saving faith be a believing that Christ is mine, or no." But I apprehend that this similitude, if rightly considered, may help much to clear this matter; namely, Christ's being compared to the sun: "The Lord God is a sun — And unto you that fear His Name, shall the Sun of Righteousness arise." (Psa. 84:11 , and Mal. 4:2) Now the sun in his being, lustre and glory is the object for us to view, but then it is impossible for us to behold it, but its rays appear to point as directly TO US as if there was not another person in the world for it to shine upon; and we partake (as it were) of the whole benefit of its influences, and yet 'tis as free for thousands of others as for us. So Jesus Christ in His personal glories and mediatorial fullness, as revealed in the Gospel, is the object of faith; but when any soul is brought to behold His glories, those eternal rays of light and love shine down particularly upon him, to remove his darkness, heal his wounds, and shed immortal blessings on his soul; so that he has a whole Savior, and yet still He is free for whosoever will.

And thus God also leads His people in duty by applying home His Truth, not barely by suggesting particular words into our minds, but by causing divine light to shine into our understanding, and giving us a view of His Word as it is, and so applying the truths therein recorded to our particular cases and circumstances.

And though many abuse the Scriptures greatly, and words may many times come into their minds without their understandings being enlightened, which they may improve very foreign from, yea contrary to, what was originally designed therein, yet that is no just argument at all against the people of God's having true teaching in this matter; though it shows the importance of taking good heed in the case, and carefully to compare spiritual things with spiritual, and to view the analogy of the Scriptures. (I Cor. 2:13)

Some say that for any of the words of Scripture to be brought in with power

upon our minds, and we take them to be the voice of God to us, this is giving heed to new revelations, because those words were spoken to others long ago. But the apostle tells us, that "WHATSOEVER things were written afore time, were written for our learning, that we through patience and comfort OF THE SCRIPTURES might have hope." (Rom. 15:4) What was spoken to any of God's people of old as directions or commands to duty, is of constant use now to guide His people in like cases; as saith the apostle, "All Scripture is given by inspiration of God; and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness, that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto ALL good works." (II Tim. 3:15-17)

The same also may be said of the promises. Here observe how the author to the Hebrews teaches us to improve the Scriptures in this respect. When he was exhorting those saints to persevere in a course of practical religion and to be content with all the allotments of Providence, he gives them this ground of support for them to rest upon, viz., "For He hath said, I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee," (Heb.13:5) Now this was a particular promise that was made to Joshua to encourage him to go on boldly in that great work of leading Israel into Canaan (Josh. 1:5). And many of our late teachers would be ready to say that if any should receive comfort from those words coming with power upon their hearts, that they were giving heed to new revelations therein; but the apostle applies it as belonging to all souls in every age that are engaged in the work God called him unto, and in going on in His ways, that they may rest upon it, of saving faith be a believing that Christ is mine, or no." But I apprehend that this similitude, if rightly considered, may help much to clear this matter; namely, Christ's being compared to the sun: "The Lord God is a sun — And unto you that fear His Name, shall the Sun of Righteousness arise." (Psa. 84:11 , and Mal. 4:2) Now the sun in his being, lustre and glory is the object for us to view, but then it is impossible for us to behold it, but its rays appear to point as directly TO US as if there was not another person in the world for it to shine upon; and we partake (as it were) of the whole benefit of its influences, and yet 'tis as free for thousands of others as for us. So Jesus Christ in His personal glories and mediatorial fullness, as revealed in the Gospel, is the object of faith; but when any soul is brought to behold His glories, those eternal rays of light and love shine down particularly upon him, to remove his darkness, heal his wounds, and shed immortal blessings on his soul; so that he has a whole Savior, and yet still He is free for whosoever will.

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people in general that cleave near unto Him.

I shall lay down this plain assertion, namely,
That in order for any man in these days to be truly an ambassador of the Lord of Host, he must experience essentially the same INTERNAL G9L L that all LI is messengers did of old, both in the Old Testament and the New.

I. There is this to be observed, that in different periods of the Church, the Lord's servants have different works to do in many particulars, according to the different circumstances that the Church is in.

Noses had many particular works to do in bringing Israel out of Egypt, and Joshua in leading them into Canaan, that none of God's servants had in after ages. The same also might be said concerning their returning from Babylon to rebuild Jerusalem and the Temple; and again of the abolishing of the Jewish ceremonies, and of building the Gospel Church, etc. Every period may have some things peculiar to that time. But then I fully agree with the excellent Elder August H. Francke that "though it cannot be said that every believing Christian must do the very same works which were done by Noah, Abraham, Moses, and others; yet ought everyone to follow the faith of those godly men and to show and exert the same with full power and energy in that state and condition wherein God has placed him, and in those circumstances which are daily offered; and in so doing, he may be fully assured that he also shall see the glory of God as well as they of old did experience the same."

I will illustrate this matter a little farther here by a familiar instance. The Scriptures relates the occasion of the apostle Paul's conversion, in the manner and circumstances of it, was uncommon and very extraordinary. (Acts 9:3,etc) A light at noonday shined round him above the brightness of the sun; the Lord spake to him with an audible voice; he was struck to the ground; was struck blind, and eat nothing for three days, etc. Now these are things which persons do not commonly experience when they are converted in our days. And yet the essence and nature of his conversion, as he describes it himself, in the seventh chapter of his Epistle to the Romans and the third to the Philippians, is the same that ALL SOULS in every age MUST experience, or they can never enter into the Kingdom of God.

So I look upon it in this case: though some things were uncommon in the call and work of the prophets and apostles, yet essentially theirs was the

same with all true ministers of Christ in our days, as I shall proceed to prove.

II. God's Ministers have the same Internal Call today, as in days of Old.

The essence of the call of all God's messengers of old, as I take it, was their being, by the work of His Spirit on their hearts, commissioned and sent forth in His Name to labor for the recovery and salvation of perishing men. And that men **MUST EXPERIENCE** the same before they can truly be ambassadors of Christ now, I think will appear evident from these following considerations:

1. They personate the same eternal God that all His messengers did of old. Moses was bid to tell the people, I AM hath sent me unto you, (Exod.3:14) And Ezekiel was to say, "Thus saith the Lord God, whether they would hear, or whether they would forbear." (Ezek. 2: 4,5) So now in these times, those that have the Word of reconciliation committed to them are "ambassadors for Christ as though God did beseech you by us, we pray you in CHRIST's stead, be ye reconciled to God," (II Cor. 5:20) And surely it is as great a thing to go in the name of the great JEHOVAH, to treat with the children of men now as ever it was. Therefore they have as much need of being particularly and powerfully called and sent by Him now, as heretofore: "How shall the preach except they be sent." (Rom. 10:15)

II. God is as near to His Church now as formerly; and therefore there needs none to be substituted in His room, to choose out, and send forth ministers. This notion that the ambassadors of the Lord of Host now have not their calling AND commission sealed to them BY the divine Spirit as clearly and powerfully as they had of old seems to be founded upon an apprehension that God is gone farther off from His Church in these days than He was then, like a king that visits his subjects in various parts of his dominion and gives them rules and directions concerning their behavior and appoints officers over them, and then returns to his palace and leaves them to choose others afterwards, and so to transact affairs in his absence.

But though it is very natural for fallen men to conceive thus of the divine Being, yet such things are highly provoking to His Sacred Majesty. This seems to be the sin that Israel was guilty of "in asking them a king." Before that the Lord was NEAR to them whenever they sought Him in truth, and did from time to time raise up and send judges and leaders to them, just as He pleased, but they could not bear to have their leaders thus from God, and to be obliged always to go to Him for them. "Nay (said they) but let us have

a king like the rest of the nations." (I Sam. 8:5,7,19) So that the Lord tells Samuel that "in this they have not rejected thee, but they have rejected me, that I should not reign over them."

A putting God afar off is the root of all such evil; therefore He sums up the cause of His destroying the Jews by the Babylonian captivity in these words, "They say the Lord hath forsaken the earth and the Lord seeth not." (Ezek. 9:9) And as they put Him far away in other things, so they did particularly in this, "of sending forth His messengers," and they held that "men were put in to do it in His room." Which appears evident by the letter that Shemaiah the Nebelamite (or dreamer) sent from Babylon about the same time to Zephaniah and the rest of the priests at Jerusalem saying, "The Lord hath made thee priest instead of Jehoiada the priest that ye should be officers in the House of the Lord, for every man that is mad and maketh himself a prophet, that thou shouldest put him in prison and in the stocks. Now therefore, why hast thou not reprov'd Jeremiah of Anathoth which maketh himself a prophet to you." (Jer. 29:25,27) Note also the method that he prescribes for to stop deceivers: it is not by sound doctrine "to convince the gainsayers," (Tit.1:9) but with force and cruelty to put them in prison and in the stocks. And such is the method that many have taken in our days.

The very body of ANTICHRIST consists in SETTING MAN UP IN CHRIST's place, as saith the apostle, "Who opposeth and exalteth himself above all that is called God, or that is worshipped; so that he as God sitteth in the Temple of God, showing himself that he is God." (II Thess. 2:4) Agreeable to which is what Luther says to the Pope (who pleads as much for a SUCCESSION down from Christ and His apostles, as any do in our land) says he, "How unlike is Christ to His successors? Who yet would be His vicars; and I fear many are so too properly. A vicar is of one absent. If the Pope be president, Christ being absent, what is he other than Christ's vicar? But what then is that Church, but a multitude WITHOUT CHRIST? And what is such a vicar but Antichrist and an idol?"

And surely there is something of Antichrist in this scheme of holding that what was peculiar to Christ formerly (namely the commissioning and sending forth His ministers) is now left with MEN to do. At least here is the "Number of his name, which is the Number of a MAN." (Rev. 13:13,18) But though man be set up thus in God's place by many, yet we are told "that the Lord hath chosen Zion: He hath desired it for His habitation (and says) this is my rest FOREVER: here will I dwell, for I have desired it." (Psa.132:13-16) And here He will call forth, direct and bless His ministers and "will yet

clothe them with salvation, that the saints may shout aloud for joy."

III. The children of men, yea the children of God, are no more capable of choosing out and sending forth meet persons for this great work now than they were in old time. If Samuel, that faithful servant of the Lord, when he was sent by His immediate command to anoint a person for another work was NOT capable of choosing out the right man himself, yea, though he was told WHAT FAMILY he should come out of, then surely God's servants now ARE NOT EQUAL to this great work of choosing out and sending forth His messengers from among the vast crowds of the children of men.

The reason that the Lord gave to Samuel why he was not fit of himself to choose out a meet person to set over His people, Israel, was because "Man looks on the outward appearance, but God looks on the heart." (I Sam. 16:7) And that reason stands as good now as then. "Man looks on the outward appearance" and therefore he is always prone to choose the wise, the noble, and learned of this world. But we are told that "God hath chosen the foolish things of the world to confound the wise, and God hath chosen the weak things of the world to confound the things that are mighty, and base things of the world and things that are despised hath God chosen, yea, and things which are not, to bring to nought things that are, that NO FLESH SHOULD GLORY IN HIS PRESENCE." (I Cor. 1:27-29) Again, man is not fit for this great work, for he is prone to get proud and selfish, and then he will encourage NONE but what will suit some selfish interest. See how early this appeared, even in the apostles themselves. And it was soon checked by our Savior. In their journey to Capernaum, the disciples got to disputing "who should be greatest." Pride and a notion of greatness was got up, and see how it discovered itself: When Christ asked, "What was it that ye disputed among yourselves by the way?" After some pause John answered Him saying, "Master we saw one casting out devils in thy name, and he followeth NOT US; and we FORBID him BECAUSE he followeth not US. But Jesus said, Forbid him not, for he that is not against us, is on our part." (Mark 9:33-40) Observe, Christ's disciples were inclined to assume that to themselves then, even when He was personally with them, that multitudes have done in latter days, but you see how sharply He reproved them for it; and can we think that He will allow it in any now?

IV. Another argument that I shall mention to prove that ministers now should have (as to the nature of it) the same call that all God's messengers had of old, is that their work is essentially as great. The work of God's

servants heretofore was to go in HIS NAME to labor for the recovery and salvation of lost men, and it is the same now.

Indeed in that part of their work of writing the Holy Scriptures they laid the foundation, and we are to build thereon. As the Church is said "to be built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ Himself being the chief corner stone." (Eph. 2:20)

But then as to their work of warning sinners to awake and turn to God, as they would escape eternal wrath. This is as great now as ever it was; and being unfaithful in it is as dreadful as ever. The Lord told Ezekiel that if he did not faithfully "warn the wicked, they would die in their iniquity, but their blood should be required at his hand. Nevertheless, if he did faithfully warn them, and they would not turn, then they should die in their iniquity, but he had delivered his soul." (Ezek. 33:8,9) So ministers in these days are set to watch for souls "as those that must give account." (Heb .13 : 17) And immortal souls are as precious now, and their blood is as dreadful to answer for, as ever it was. O! therefore how can anyone dare to enter into this great work at any time without knowing that they are called AND commissioned by Him that IS ABLE, and faithful to carry them safely through it? Yea, though they were invited into this work by never so many of the children of men.

Again, the work of feeding God's people (that is dear to Him as the apple of his eye) is as great now as ever it was. And as His flock is so peculiarly dear to Him, so He has always reserved this prerogative to Himself alone, TO CHOOSE OUT and APPOINT meet persons over them to feed them. When our Savior had been speaking of the importance and blessedness of saints standing always on their watch, Peter asked whether He spake that unto them, or even to all. In answer to which He spake something to them concerning their particular work. "And the Lord said, who then is that faithful and wise steward, whom HIS LORD SHALL MAKE RULER OVER HIS HOUSEHOLD, to give them their portion of meat in due season? Blessed is that servant whom his Lord when He cometh shall find so doing." (Luke 12: 35-43) Here you see that it is the LORI) THAT SETS PERSONS OVER HIS HOUSEHOLD, "to be stewards of the mysteries of God," (1 Cor. 4:1) and to "feed his sheep and lambs." (John 21: 15,16) Also the apostle plainly holds forth to the elders of the Church at Ephesus that they were SET over the flock by SPECIAL CALL and influence of the divine Spirit. Says he, "Take heed therefore unto yourselves and to all the

flock over which the HOLY GHOST hath MADE YOU OVERSEERS, to feed the Church of God, which He hath purchased with His own blood." (Acts 20: 28) How can it be truly said that a man is set over a flock by the Holy Ghost if they are not called into this work by His special influence? Without this, if all the men in this world should approbate them, yet in God's sight they "run before they are sent."

"I have not sent these prophets, yet they ran. I have not spoken to them, yet they prophesied." (Jer. 23:21) O! how many woes does the Lord denounce against false pastors in this chapter? He says "they speak peace to His enemies," (ver.17) "and prophesy lies in His name; yet, I sent them not, nor commanded them. Therefore they shall not profit THIS PEOPLE AT ALL." (ver.32) "But He will pour His vengeance on them, and will deliver, and gather His people; and I will set up shepherds over them, which shall feed them, and they shall fear no more, nor be dismayed, neither shall they be lacking, saith the Lord." (ver.4) Now if we consider what is said in verses 7,8, it will appear that what is here said has a peculiar reference to these latter times. So again, ver. 20, "in the latter days ye shall consider it perfectly.- And I believe that the time is drawing on more and more when the Lord will deliver His flock from those that DEVOUR them instead of FEEDING of them. (Ezek. 34) "And He will give them pastors after His own heart." (Jer. 3:15)

Now then to sum up these things in few words: Since Gospel-Ministers now personate the same eternal God that His servants did of old, and since He is present with His Church to send them forth as really now as formerly; since also man is no more fit for it than heretofore, and the work of watching for souls as those that must give account and of feeding God's flock is as great now as ever it was: Therefore I conclude that in order for persons rightly to go into that work in these days they must experience essentially the same call from the Lord of Hosts, that all His messengers did in old time.

The Nature of This Call

I would first observe that as in conversion, the Lord deals variously with different persons as to the means He uses and as to the length of time they are under conviction before the work is accomplished, and also as to many circumstances that attend it, so that no man can lay out an exact method and determine that every soul which is savingly changed must be led exactly in that particular path. Yet, as to the essence of the change, all experience alike

that they are truly converted. So it is in a call to preach the Gospel; the means that are used and many circumstances of it, may be very various, but the substance of the call is always the same.

One thing more I would also premise before I go on, and that is that it will be necessarily implied in the following discourse.

THAT A MAN MUST BE A REAL SAINT IN ORDER TO HIS BEING TRULY CALLED OF GOD INTO

I. There is a discovery of the present state of God's people. This is absolutely necessary in order for a man's being able to perform His work. The work of God's messengers is compared to that of a "watchman" both in the Old Testament and New. (Ezek.33, & Heb.13) Now it is necessary, in order for a watchman rightly to perform his work, that he be first set where he can clearly view the state and circumstances of the army, that he may see where they are exposed, and when the enemy is coming in. How absurd a thing it would be for to set a man for a watchman that was blind, or to set one in a place where he could see little or nothing of the case of the people? Every whit as absurd is it to set a man to watch for souls who never was spiritually enlightened from above and brought to see the present case of the Church, and of the world of mankind as it is.

Christ says of the Pharisees, "They be blind leaders of the blind;" and therefore they were all like to "fall into the ditch." (Matt. 15:14) And they showed their blindness greatly in this, "that they did not discern that time;" (Matt 16:3) and therefore they cried out against the great friend of God's people, even the "Son of God Himself", instead of warning them against their enemies. Now this blindness was not the want of human wisdom and learning, for they had much of that. But it was the want of spiritual and divine illuminations, as appears evident from Like 10:21: "Thou has HID these things from the wise and prudent, and hast REVEALED them unto babes,"etc. Indeed every saint has some views of things, but to those which the Lord calls to be His watchmen, He gives more special and clear discoveries of them. And we may see something of this in the various calls that we have a particular account of in Scripture.

When the Lord called Moses to go and lead Israel out of Egypt, He showed him clearly the condition that they lay in and what He now designed

concerning them. Says He, "I have heard the cry of thy brethren under their bondage and am come down to deliver them," (Exo. 3:7) So when the Lord came to call Jeremiah He sets before him the awful case and condition that the Jews were then in and the dreadful desolations that were coming upon them. (Jer. 1:14) The same He also showed to Ezekiel (chapter 2). This we may also observe in the New Testament: in Matthew 9, our Savior shows His disciples how that "the fields were white to the harvest, but the laborers were few: pray ye therefore the Lord of the harvest to send forth laborers." That is, He gave them a view of the condition that immortal souls lay in then to stir up their souls to thirst for their deliverance and to cry for their help: and the next thing is He sends them forth to labor in this field as you may see in the beginning of the next chapter.

The like you may see in Luke 10, where it appears that not only the twelve, but the seventy were thus sent. In this call there is contained a having the treasure of the Gospel opened and committed to the soul. "How can they preach except they be sent? as it is written, how beautiful are the feet of them that preach the Gospel of peace, and bring glad tidings of good things." (Rom. 10:15) Here the apostle shows, not only the necessity of their being sent in order for them to preach aright, but also that those which are sent, have the treasure of the Gospel and glad tidings committed to them to bring to immortal souls.

When the LORD sends any He gives them their errand: "Go (says He to Moses) and gather the elders of Israel together and say unto them the Lord God of your fathers ... appeared unto me saying, I have surely visited you and seen that which is done to you in Egypt. And I have said I WILL BRING you out of the affliction of Egypt unto the land of the Canaanites." (Exo. 3:16) This having the Gospel-Treasure committed to us is compared to receiving and eating food. "Thy words were found and I did eat them, and thy word was unto me the joy and rejoicing of mine heart." (Jer. 15:16) And the Lord says to Ezekiel, "Son of man eat that thou findest; eat this roll and go speak unto the house of Israel." (Ezek. 3:1) And I apprehend that John's "eating the little book and then being told that he must prophesy before many people and nations and tongues and kings," (Rev. 10:10-11) implies in it something more than just his personal ministry and that it reaches to ALL those that shall be CALLED forth as God's messengers afterwards, even until "time shall be no longer," (verse 6) and till "the Mystery of God shall be finished." (verse 7)

I know it is said of saints in general that "thy shall not live by bread alone

but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God." (Matt. 4:4) But His ministers not only eat it for their own souls' nourishment, but they receive, as it were, the whole treasure of the Word, to feed others with also. Hence the Lord says to Ezekiel, "Fill thy bowels with this roll that I give thee." (Ezek.3:3) And the apostle compares it to a vessel's being filled with food or treasure to feed other: "We have this treasure in earthen vessels that the excellency of the power may be of God and not of us." (II Cor. 4:7)

By the treasure of the Gospel's being committed to men I would not be understood to hold forth that they have an inherent stock given them so that they can do without constant supplies from above. No, by no means. For without constant supplies from Christ, "as the branch has from the vine, we can do nothing" (John 15). We can no more feed God's people aright without His constant help than an earthen vessel could!